

Message Text

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21-54

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 DRC-01 AID-20 IO-13 CU-04 EUR-25

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10

PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-15 USIA-15 ACDA-19

COME-00 TRSE-00 XMB-07 IGA-02 OPIC-12 EB-11 /214 W

----- 013759

R 191200Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7135

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 2111

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, SU

SUBJ: NIMEIRI COUNTINUES CONSOLIDATE POSITION

REF: KHARTOUM 2069

1. SUMMARY: NIMEIRI APPEARS BE FULLY IN CONTROL AND DIS-INCLINED MAKE CONCESSIONS. LARGE NUMBER PROSECUTIONS LIKELY. NO DECISION YET ON REOPENING UNIVERSITY. PRESS CONTINUES PUBLICIZE ABU GASSIM'S "REVOLUTIONARY" ROLE AND GOS EFFORTS MEET TRANSPORTATION AND SUPPLY PROBLEMS. IN SHORT RUN, NIMEIRI IS STRONGER. IN LONGER RUN, HIS STRENGTH OR WEAKNESS CONTINUES DEPEND ON HIS USE OF THE WARNING AND GRACE PERIOD HE HAS RECEIVED. END SUMMARY.

2. NIMEIRI REMAINS CONFIDENT. PRESIDENT NIMEIRI'S PUBLIC POSTURE OF OPERATING FROM POSITION OF STRENGTH HAS CONTINUED SINCE REFTEL AND HIS APPARENT CONFIDENCE HAS EVEN CONFIDENTIAL

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INCREASED. IN SERIES OF MEETINGS WITH POPULAR ORGANIZATIONS

(AS WELL AS ARMY UNITS IN THREE TOWNS AREA) HE HAS GIVEN NO INDICATION OF CONCEDED TO DEMANDS SUCH AS SACKING SSU DEPOSED ABU GASSIM RAISED DURING AND AFTER THE DEMONSTRATIONS. TO CONTRARY HE HAS A LEAST INDIRECTLY SUPPORTED THE ACTIONS TAKEN IN HIS ABSENCE. FOR EXAMPLE, HE HAS PUSHED ABUL GASSIM TO THE FORE BY HAVING HIM ADDRESS HDQTRS UNITS OF ARMY AND SENDING HIM ON TOUR OF EIGHT PROVINCES (ALL EXCEPT KHARTOUM AND BLUE NILE WHICH ARE BEING COVERED BY PRESIDENT PERSONALLY) TO CONDUCT SIMILAR MEETINGS AND EXPLAIN "FACTS" OF DISTURBANCES. NIMEIRI ALSO PRAISED ELEMENTS SUCH AS GEZIRA FARMERS WHO "CONFRONTED THE PLOTTERS," IMPLYING SUPPORT OF VIGILANTE ACTION AND CRITICIZED THE "WEAK" AND "HESITANT" WHICH AGAIN APPEARS BE ENDORSEMENT OF SSU ACTIVISTS SUCH AS ABU GASSIM. HE HAS ALSO ALLEGED FINANCIAL ROLE OF FOREIGN SOURCES IN CREATING UNREST BUT WE ARE STILL INCLINED TO VIEW SUCH CHARGES PRIMARILY AS BOGEYS.

3. MORE THAN RHETORIC. WHILE NIMEIRI IN THESE MEETINGS HAS BEEN FREE WITH RHETORIC AND REVOLUTIONARY JARGON, HE HAS AT SAME TIME ADDRESSED SOME OF THE REAL PROBLEMS FACED BY REGIME. HE HAS ALSO EFFECTIVELY PUT THE ISSUES BACK TO THE PEOPLE BY THE TECHNIQUE OF POSING SERIES OF QUESTIONS TO VARIOUS GROUPS WHICH IN BRIEF ASK HOW PEOPLE THEMSELVES CAN SOLVE OR AT LEAST CONTRIBUTE TO SOLUTION OF EXISTING DIFFICULTIES. INTERESTINGLY, HE HAS ALSO ASKED THE GROUPS TO OUTLINE WHAT THEY WOULD CONSIDER TO BE THEIR "IDEAL" RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SSU. IF THE EXCHANGE IS CANDID (WHICH IS QUESTIONABLE), IT COULD PROVIDE A MORE VIABLE BASE FOR THE SSU THAN PREVIOUS EFFORTS BASED ON IDEOLOGY ALONE. HE HAS ALSO CLAIMED THAT ARMED FORCES ARE LIKELY BE NEXT TARGET OF OPPOSITIONISTS AND URGED CONTINUING VIGILANCE. IN OTHER ACTIONS, WE UNDERSTAND THAT AT LEAST ONE PERSONNEL CHANGE HAS BEEN MADE WITH COMMISSIONER OF NORTHERN PROVINCE (WHICH INCLUDES ATBARA) BEING REMOVED WITHOUT ANNOUNCEMENT. THIS RESULTS FROM HIS FAILURE TO CONTROL SITUATION AND NIMEIRI UNHAPPINESS WITH FACT THAT COMMISSIONER'S REPORTS FAILED INDICATE POTENTIAL FOR TROUBLE. GOS HAS ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT INTERMEDIATE SCHOOLS WILL BE OPEN SEPT 22. SECONDARY STUDENTS

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WILL PROBABLY RETURN THE FOLLOWING WEEK.

4. UNRESOLVED ISSUES. GOS HAS ANNOUNCED RELEASE OF "MANY" STUDENT BUT ONLY PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT ON LAWYERS AND UNION LEADERS IS THAT INTERROGATIONS OF ARRESTED RAILWAY UNION LEADERS UNDERWAY IN ATBARA. SILENCE PRESUMABLY REFLECTS SOME INDECISION AS TO EXACTLY HOW FAR GOS WISHES GO PROSECUTING DISSIDENTS,

BUT WE REMAIN CONVINCED THAT SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF PROSECUTIONS ARE PLANNED.

5. UNIVERSITY REMAINS A LARGE AND TROUBLESOME QUESTION MARK. POLITICAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE UNIVERSITY WILL MEET SEPT 20, BUT THERE ARE ALSO MOVES AFOOT BY VICE CHANCELLOR AND OFFICIALS IN MINISTRY EDUCATION TO OUTFLANK IT AND GET UNIVERSITY REOPENED. VICE CHANCELLOR TOLD DCM HE STILL CONSIDERS UNIVERSITY ACT (WHICH VICE CHANCELLOR CONSIDER HIS CREATION AND WHICH NIMEIRI SIGNED LAST JUNE) AS DEFINING ROLE OF UNIVERSITY. IF EFFORT MADE SUBSTANTIALLY ALTER ITS TERMS, VICE CHANCELLOR INDICATED HE WOULD RESIGN. AS FOR REOPENING DATE, HE HOPES IMPRESS NIMEIRI WITH POLITICAL SERIOUSNESS OF MISSING ENTIRE ACADEMIC YEAR WHICH WILL OCCUR IF CLASSES DO NOT RESUME RELATIVELY SOON. NIMEIRI, NATURALLY, IS UNLIKELY REOPEN UNIVERSITY WITHOUT SOME ASSURANCE THAT STUDENTS WILL BE UNDER MORE EFFECTIVE CONTROL.

6. ACTION ON ECONOMIC FRONT. GOVERNMENT CONTINUES STRESS MEASURES BEING TAKEN TO ALLEVIATE PROBLEMS, PARTICULARLY IN SUPPLY AND TRANSPORTATION SECTORS. PRESS FOCUS LAST FEW DAYS HAS BEEN ON STORIES CONCERNING (A) DECISION USE ARMY TRUCKS ON EXTENDED BASIS MOVE EXPORT GOODS TO PORT SUDAN AND BRING BACK SUPPLIES; (B) VISIT OF SUDAN RAILWAYS GENERAL MANAGER TO GERMANY, UK AND BELGIUM WHICH REPORTEDLY RESULTED IN PURCHASE OF NEW LOCOMOTIVES AS WELL AS AGREEMENTS TO REPAIR EXISTING FLEET; (C) DECISION ESTABLISH PERMANENT REPAIR TEAMS TO WORK ON PORT SUDAN-KHARTOUM ROAD DURING INTERIM PERIOD UNTIL ASPHALTING CAN BE COMPLETED HOPEFULLY WITHIN THREE YEARS; (D) ARRIVAL OF US PL 480 WHEAT SHIPMENT; (E) GRANT OF WHEAT FLOUR BY EEC; (F) UK-USG SUPPORT OF

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EMERGENCY SUPPLY EFFORT; AND (G) EVEN VISIT BY US BANKER (BANK OF CHICAGO).

7. COMMENT: THERE SEEMS NO DOUBT THAT NIMEIRI GOVERNMENT CURRENTLY SECURE AND WITH MUCH OF ORGANIZED OPPOSITION SHATTERED OR IMPRISONED, NIMEIRI'S POSITION PROBABLY IMPROVED. HE ALSO HAS PSYCHOLOGICAL ADVANTAGE OF BEING A WINNER AND IT IS LIKELY THAT POTENTIAL SOURCES OF TROUBLE SUCH AS UNION RANK-AND-FILE WILL THINK TWICE BEFORE FOLLOWING LEADERS IN ANTI-GOS ACTION IN NEAR FUTURE.

8. THUS, WHILE NIMEIRI HAS SOME TIME AND MAY EVEN GET MORE COOPERATION FROM KEY ELEMENTS SUCH AS RAILWAY WORKERS THAN HE HAS HAD IN RECENT MONTHS, THE KEY TO REGIME'S FUTURE REMAINS MAKING PROGRESS IN RESOLVING

SUPPLY AND INFLATION SITUATION AND IN ESTABLISHING A
VIALE POLITICAL ORGANIZATION. NEITHER WILL BE EASY -- IN
PART BECAUSE OF GOS LACK FINANCIAL RESOURCES. BREWER

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